



Yorktown Community Schools

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Home of the Tigers!

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

November 25, 2014

Dear Sir/Madame,

I am writing in response to FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler's recently announced proposal to raise the E-Rate funding cap by \$1.5 billion. The E-Rate program currently represents the only source of federal funding aimed at educational technology and is critical in providing discounts to assist schools like Yorktown Community Schools to obtain affordable telecommunications and internet access. As Superintendent at Yorktown Community Schools in Yorktown, IN, I strongly support the infusion of the additional funding, and urge you to do the same.

Our suburban district is 2400 students strong. Currently, 35% of our student body qualifies for free/reduced meals and textbook assistance. This percentage has grown significantly over the last five years, and the trend continues upward. Although, we have been recognized as a leader in technology both on a state and national platform, our current status as such would be in great jeopardy without the assistance of E-Rate dollars. E-Rate dollars are critical in affording our district the capability of impressive Internet connectivity. The costs associated with this necessary service are on the rise, which puts our efforts at risk. Additional dollars will secure our current situation and possibly allow for even more expansion; thus, empowering our students by supporting curricular and instructional programs that are connectivity dependent. In addition, we use such funds to off-set the cost of our website operations, security system lines, and telephonic lines which are all critical to instructional delivery, safety measures, daily operations, and communications. Unfortunately, the E-Rate funds for those are already at risk and declining; thus, the need for more E-Rate dollars.

To raise the cap of the E-Rate program by \$1.5 billion, the Universal Service Fund fee will increase by 16 cents per month per account. 16 additional cents per month—less than half a penny per day—totals to an additional \$1.92 per year, approximately the cost of a cup of coffee. This proposal is both reasonable and justified, asking contributors to forgo one cup of coffee over the course of a year to ensure that our nation's schools are connected to the internet in a way that supports 21st century learning and prepares them for post-secondary opportunity.

Having just attended the Future Ready Summit in DC, no one questions that it is time to ensure that our schools are connected with the quality of connectivity that is sufficient and scalable for today's ever-growing connectivity needs.

The single most effective step the FCC can take to bolster E-Rate's current and future success is to ensure that the program's funding is adequate to support, in a sustainable manner, the program's changes and goals as adopted in July. Chairman Wheeler's proposal does just that, representing a deliberate effort to expand educational opportunities for our nation's students. By focusing on high-capacity broadband connections to the internet (particularly those in rural communities) and providing sustained, additional funding to the E-Rate program, the modernized E-Rate will ensure the nation's schools—including Yorktown Community Schools—are able to keep pace with ever increasing connectivity needs.

Thank you for considering my response as you move forward with your decision on the E-Rate program and its funding. I applaud Chairman Wheeler and the FCC for its continued efforts to protect the already oversubscribed E-Rate program by ensuring the future of this successful program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dr. Jennifer McCormick". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jennifer" being more prominent than the last name "McCormick".

Dr. Jennifer McCormick